

Representatives gathered today for the November plenary sitting of the Consell de Formentera. Assembly members came together to urge the Balearic government to “restore surgical service at the Formentera Hospital” —which a recent departure left without its specialist surgeon— “as soon as possible”.

Conseller Ramírez brought the proposal, in which the administration points out that a hospital's ability to perform surgical functions is “crucial to proper healthcare provision”, and insists the regional government go beyond the contingency plan currently in place to assure “a professionally-staffed and properly-run service at Formentera's hospital”.

Climate emergency

In a nod to Climate Change Day and thanks to backing from the GxF-PSOE governing team, a declaration of climate emergency passed despite the abstention of opposition group Sa Unió. Backed by environment conseller Antonio J Sanz, the proposal refers to the grave peril faced by the planet, living beings and ecosystems and recognises “the veritable existence of the climate crisis, and the gravity of the situation”. That's why, the text continues, “reducing emissions is the only sure path forward for the island”.

Declaring climate emergency means enacting efforts to educate and change the habits of every islander, and accepting the ecological crisis as a real one. The Consell de Formentera pledges to set in motion such a process of social change and promises to reach the initiative's general objectives. Formentera makes other pledges as well, like implementing new regional legislation on climate change that took effect this year; making the necessary political commitments and assuring the resources necessary to cutting greenhouse gases; progressively replacing fossil fuels; assuring sound management of public spaces; working to recover aquifers and fomenting a locally functioning economy.

Government proclamation

The plenary session also came with unanimous approval for a proclamation on International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. Equality consellera Vanessa Parellada pointed out that “after the Canary Islands, the Balearics see more cases of gender violence than anywhere in Spain”. Twenty-nine women have denounced domestic violence this year alone,

said Parellada, “13 in emergency situations and 16 following recommendations from primary care providers”. In the document, Formentera's political representatives pledge their commitment to the fight to end gender violence, promising to use “public policy and action to promote male and female equality — to achieve a society where every individual's equality and dignity are part of humankind's inalienable rights”. Formentera also calls on the central government to keep the promise it lays out in its “National Pledge” (*Pacto de Estado*) to stop gender violence.

Molí Vell de la Mola

The session brought cross-party approval for two other proposals. First, to classify the “Old La Mola Mill” (*Molí Vell de la Mola*) as a cultural interest site. According to patrimony chief Raquel Guasch, “as one of seven local flour mills which at one point existed on the island, this windmill is part of Formentera's ethnological heritage, and the only one with original machinery is still in place”. La Mola's Molí Vell is included in the Formentera Catalogue of Cultural Heritage Sites, established in 2010 and mandating maximum protection for the monument.

Other proposals

One proposal to score cross-party support came from Sa Unió, calling for local government to implement a door-to-door service to pick up deceased animals. The authors of the proposal described it as a “petition from many animal owners and animal professionals” and pointed out that “such a service is envisioned in the protocol for the public service of solid waste collection and transport”.

Another two measures passed with GxF-PSOE support and despite the abstaining vote of Sa Unió representatives. One deals with an oversight regime and limitations on spending and obligations pursuant to article 13 of Royal Decree 424/2017, issued 28 April. “The new protocol is designed to make the oversight process observed by local government employees more objective and responsive”, said economy and tax office conseller Bartomeu Escandell, even as he asserted “some controls by inspection staff will always be necessary to guarantee the process”.

The second proposal to get the go-ahead called for changes in the ordinance regulating the fees imposed on private citizens for using municipal fitness facilities and services and taking part in sports-related activities. Sport consellera Paula Ferrer described the modified regulations as “key to streamlining administrative procedures so we can improve the service delivered to islanders”.

The newest representative of Sa Unió, Maribel Castelló Yern, assumed her office during the plenary session. Castelló takes the place of Anna Negre.

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